

Measure Up

Assessment news for twelfth-grade teachers

Fall 2006

Did you know?

- In 1969, the first NAEP assessment was given to 9-, 13-, and 17-year-old students in citizenship, science and writing.
- In 1996, NAEP implemented a change in procedures to increase the inclusion of students with disabilities and English language learners.
- In 2007, a sample of twelfth-graders nationwide will take the writing or reading assessment.

High School Transcript Study

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducts a High School Transcript Study (HSTS), which surveys the curricula offered in our nation's high schools and the course-taking patterns of high school students. The following results are from the 2000 study, which collected and analyzed transcripts for twelfth-grade students who graduated. The HSTS was again conducted in 2005 and those results will be available later this year.

Course Credits Earned

- Overall, the number of course credits earned by high school graduates increased throughout the 1990s. In 2000, high school graduates earned an average of 26.2 course credits, compared to 23.6 in 1990.
- The average number of credits earned in the core academic subject fields (mathematics, science, English, and social studies) increased from 13.7 to 15.0 credits between 1990 and 2000.

Grade Point Average

- From 1990 to 2000, the grade point average (GPA) of high school graduates increased from 2.68 to 2.94 (with a highest possible GPA of 4.00).

- High school graduates in 2000 earned a higher mean GPA during grade 12 than in any other grade. The 2000 high school graduates earned a twelfth-grade mean GPA of 3.03, compared to 2.92 for ninth-grade, 2.89 for tenth-grade, and 2.92 for eleventh-grade.

Education Achievement

- High school graduates in the 2000 HSTS who earned mathematics course credits during the twelfth grade earned a higher average score on the NAEP 2000 mathematics assessment than graduates who did not earn mathematics course credits in grade 12.
- Those HSTS graduates with Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) mathematics credits achieved a higher mean NAEP mathematics assessment score than graduates without AP/IB mathematics credits. Similarly, graduates with AP/IB science credits also achieved a higher mean NAEP science assessment score than graduates without AP/IB science credits.

Source: Perkins, R., Kleiner B., Roey, S., and Brown, J. (2004). The High School Transcript Study: A Decade of Change in Curricula and Achievement, 1990-2000. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.



Different Assessments, Different Purposes

A variety of assessments are used by teachers, parents, students, and policymakers to improve education and evaluate achievement. Quality assessments can help: teachers focus classroom instruction; parents identify their child's strengths and weaknesses; students monitor their own progress; and policymakers evaluate programs. From classroom and unit assessments to national assessments, the results benefit everyone.

Teacher-directed, or classroom assessment, is necessary to determine the individual progress of students, the quality of the curriculum, and the effectiveness of teaching strategies.

The challenging classroom contains a variety of assessment strategies which guarantee that students are evaluated in many ways. The teacher observes students at work, and, using rubrics, evaluates group collaboration, judges presentations, measures responses to discussion questions, and assesses writing, for example.

District and state assessments also play an important role in the assessment cycle. These assessments are used to

evaluate programs and identify areas of curriculum or testing that need improvement. They also provide individual scores for students, schools, and districts.

On the national level, The Nation's Report Card, or NAEP, provides national performance data for twelfth-graders for many subjects based on an assessment framework. It is given throughout the country to a sample of students, which allows NAEP to track national scores over time. NAEP measures what students know and are able to do.

To see the
NAEP Assessment
frameworks, visit
[http://www.nagb.org/
pubs/pubs.html](http://www.nagb.org/pubs/pubs.html)

	Teacher-directed assessments	District- and State-directed assessments	NAEP
What is the level of reporting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual student at all grades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students Classes Schools Districts and/or State at various grades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States and certain large urban districts at grades 4 and 8 Nation at grade 12
Who are the audiences for the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers Students Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers Students Parents Administrators Policymakers General public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General public Policymakers School administrators Teachers Researchers
What can teachers do with the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine content mastery for individual students Evaluate effectiveness of teaching strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate program effectiveness Identify areas of curricular strength and weakness Track progress of student groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track the progress of student groups over time Identify achievement gaps between subgroups of students

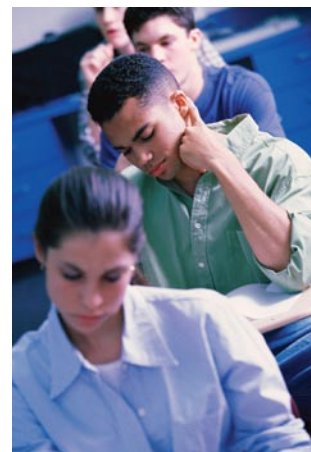
Writing Tasks:

Narrative, Informative, Persuasive

In 2007, most sampled twelfth-grade students will take the NAEP writing assessment. During this assessment, they will be asked to respond to two prompts, each within 25 minutes.

The NAEP writing framework, which guides the assessment content, specifies that students must write narratives, informative essays, and persuasive pieces. The 2002 writing assessment included examples of each type of prompt; one of each was released to the public after the assessment. For narrative writing, twelfth-grade students were given a prompt describing a tall tale along with a sample story about a young man who

used a rope to lasso rain clouds and move them from a flood-stricken town to a drought-stricken town. For informative writing, twelfth-grade students responded to a prompt that asked them to select one book they would save for future generations. On the persuasive task, students were asked to make an argument about who they think are the true heroes of our society.



Sample Narrative Prompt

A tall tale is a type of story that uses exaggeration to solve a real-life problem. As the story progresses, the main character demonstrates superhuman abilities to overcome ordinary obstacles. The story shown below is an example of a tall tale. **Imagine that you will participate in a “tall-tale writing contest” at your school. Write your own tall tale. You can write about yourself, someone you know, or someone you imagine. Be sure to give your main character whatever superhuman abilities are necessary to save the day.**

Sample Informative Prompt

A novel written in the 1950s describes a world where people are not allowed to read books. A small group of people who want to save books memorize them, so that the books won't be forgotten. For example, an old man who has memorized the novel *The Call of the Wild* helps a young boy memorize it by reciting the story to him. In this way, the book is saved for the future. **If you were told that you could save just one book for future generations, which book would you choose? Write an essay in which you discuss which book you would choose to save for future generations and what it is about the book that makes it important to save. Be sure to discuss in detail why the book is important to you and why it would be important to future generations.**

Sample Persuasive Prompt

Who are our heroes? The media attention given to celebrities suggests that these people are today's heroes. Yet ordinary people perform extraordinary acts of courage every day that go virtually unnoticed. Are these people the real heroes? **Write an essay in which you define heroism and argue who you think our heroes really are—mass-media stars, ordinary people, or maybe both. Be sure to use examples of specific celebrities, other people you have heard or read about, or people from your own community to support your position.**

- To use released twelfth-grade items in the classroom, teachers should visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> and select “Sample Questions.”
- From there, teachers can select “Search Options,” and then a subject and grade 12. A series of questions will appear, and teachers can review the questions, sample student responses, and performance data for students nationwide.

What is NAEP?

NAEP stands for the National Assessment of Educational Progress. You may know it as The Nation's Report Card. It's the only national assessment that shows what students across the country know and can do in subjects such as reading and mathematics. It is different from your state assessments and even the SAT and ACT because it represents seniors across the country, not just those in your state or those who want to go on to college.

How can I encourage students' participation?

Remind students that NAEP is important. When NAEP results are reported in the news, they influence the public's opinion of the quality of education that we are providing to our students. Encouraging your students to participate and do their best gives them the opportunity to show how well America's students are performing.

What do I have to do?

Your students will need to be out of class for a little more than 90 minutes to participate in NAEP. You do not have to do anything to prepare for the assessment; you just need to release students from class and encourage them to do their best. Students are selected to represent hundreds of other seniors across the nation. They can help show the country how much American students know and can do.

If you want to...

Visit...

Learn more about NAEP results

The Nation's Report Card at
<http://nationsreportcard.gov>

View NAEP data for a particular state or contact your NAEP State Coordinator

The National Center for Education Statistics at
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states>

Access specific results for a grade level, subject, jurisdiction, and/or subgroup of students

The NAEP Data Explorer at
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde>

Find information regarding the types of questions used on NAEP assessments or to view subject-specific questions

The NAEP Questions Tool at
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/ITMRLS>

Download a Sample Questions Booklet that contains sample test questions for the upcoming and previous assessments

The National Center for Education Statistics at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/booklets.asp>

Learn more about how policy is drafted for each NAEP assessment

The National Assessment Governing Board at
<http://www.nagb.org>

Offer a comment or suggestion on NAEP

The National Center for Education Statistics mailbox at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/contactus.asp>

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